

IN THE CLAIMS

1-28. (cancelled)

29. (previously presented) A method for transport of toner material in an electrophotographic printer or copier, comprising the steps of:

transporting toner material from a supply reservoir into a developer station after an under-run of a lower first limit value by a first toner material quantity present in said developer station;

transporting toner material from a transport reservoir into said supply reservoir after an under-run of a lower second limit value of a second toner material quantity present in said supply reservoir;

detecting and storing at least a quantity of said toner material transported from said supply reservoir to said developer station when said lower second limit value is under-run; and

associating said detected and stored toner material quantity with said transport reservoir from which said toner material is extracted to fill said supply reservoir after said under-run of said second limit value, said associating lasting at least until said lower second limit value is reached.

30. (previously presented) A method according to claim 29 wherein the toner material quantity is detected without the transport reservoir from which toner material is transported into the supply reservoir being present in the printer or copier associated with the subsequently provided transport reservoir.

31. (previously presented) A method according to claim 29 wherein after the under-run of the lower second limit value, toner material is transported from the

transport reservoir into the supply reservoir at least until the lower second limit value is exceeded.

32. (previously presented) A method according to claim 29 wherein after the under-run of the lower second limit value, toner material is continued to be transported from the transport reservoir into the supply reservoir until an upper third limit value is reached or exceeded.

33. (previously presented) A method according to claim 32 wherein the detected and stored toner material quantity is compared with a fourth limit value associated with the transport reservoir, the transport reservoir being identified as empty upon reaching or exceeding the fourth limit value.

34. (previously presented) A method according to claim 33 wherein state information that specifies whether toner material is present in the transport reservoir is stored in a storage range associated with the transport reservoir.

35. (previously presented) A method according to claim 33 wherein a number of transport actions associated with the transport reservoir is only compared with the fourth limit value after the third limit value has not been reached after a preset transport time or after a preset number of transport actions.

36. (previously presented) A method according to claim 35 wherein the preset transport time is determined from the number of transport actions with preset duration.

37. (previously presented) A method according to claim 29 wherein the detected and stored toner material quantity is determined with aid of a toner concentration of a toner material-carrier particle mixture present in the developer

station, the first lower limit value being a minimum toner concentration of the toner material-carrier particle mixture.

38. (previously presented) A method according to claim 29 wherein the supply reservoir comprises a buffer.

39. (previously presented) A method according to claim 29 wherein a preset quantity of a temperature measurement event is transported from the reservoir into the developer station after the under-run of the minimum quantity of toner material in the developer station.

40. (previously presented) A method according to claim 39 wherein the preset quantity is established via a control of a transport duration, the transport capacity being substantially constant.

41. (previously presented) A method according to claim 40 wherein the transport duration is rigidly set for a transport action in the printer or copier.

42. (previously presented) A method according to claim 41 wherein a number of the transport actions per reservoir is detected.

43. (previously presented) A method according to claim 29 wherein the toner material is transported with aid of a preset negative pressure.

44. (previously presented) A method according to claim 39 wherein at least in one region, the preset quantity of toner material is transported with aid of a paddlewheel or a transport spindle from the supply reservoir into the developer station, the transported quantity being determined with aid of rotations of the paddlewheel or of the transport spindle.

45. (previously presented) A method according to claim 44 wherein a number of the rotations for a transport action is rigidly set in the printer or copier.

46. (previously presented) A method according to claim 45 wherein the number of the rotations per transport action is controlled with aid of the transport duration given a substantially constant drive rotation speed of the paddlewheel or of the transport spindle.

47. (previously presented) A method according to claim 46 wherein the number of the transport actions is detected per reservoir.

48. (previously presented) A method according to claim 29 wherein at least one further transport action is implemented when a minimum quantity of a temperature measurement event in the developer station is not achieved or exceeded after a transport action.

49. (previously presented) A method according to claim 33 wherein no toner material is transported from the transport reservoir when state information specifies that toner material is no longer contained in the transport reservoir.

50. (previously presented) A system for transport of toner material in an electrophotographic or copier, comprising:

a first transport device that transports toner material from a supply reservoir into a developer station after an under-run of a lower first limit value of a first toner material quantity present in the developer station;

a second transport device that transports toner material from a transport reservoir into said supply reservoir after an under-run of a lower second limit value by a second toner material quantity present in said supply reservoir;

a detection device that detects a toner material quantity transported from said supply reservoir to said developer station when said lower second limit value is under-run; and

an association device which associates said detected toner material quantity with said transport reservoir from which said toner material is extracted after said under-run of said lower second limit value, said association being maintained at least until said second lower limit value is reached.

51. (currently amended) A system according to claim 50 wherein the transport reservoir comprises an information medium on which at least a total number of transport actions associated with the transport reservoir or a possible number of transport actions is applied as a limit value in a machine-readable format.

52. (previously presented) A method for determination of a fill state of a transport reservoir for toner material, comprising the steps of:

transporting toner material from a transport reservoir into a developer station with aid of a toner transport system of a printer or copier;

detecting at least a toner material quantity supplied to the developer station by use of a number of implemented transport actions;

associating the detected transport actions with the transport reservoir from which the toner material is extracted for supply of the extracted toner material quantity; and

only then comparing said number of implemented transport actions associated with the transport reservoir with a limit value after a minimum quantity of toner material in the developer station or a further reservoir has not been reached after a preset number of successively implemented transport actions for transport of toner material from the transport reservoir.

53. (previously presented) A method according to claim 52 wherein the transport reservoir is identified as empty after reaching or exceeding the limit value of the transport reservoir.

54. (previously presented) A method according to claim 53 wherein state information that specifies whether toner material is present in the transport reservoir is stored in a storage region associated with the transport reservoir.

55. (previously presented) A system for determination of a fill state of a transport reservoir for toner material with a toner transport system that transports toner material from a transport reservoir into a developer station, comprising:

a device to detect, with aid of a number of implemented transport actions, a toner material quantity supplied to the developer station;

a compensating unit to compare the number of the implemented transport actions associated with the transport reservoir with a limit value, the comparison only being conducted after a minimum quantity of toner material in the developer station or in a supply reservoir as a buffer has not been reached after a preset number of successively implemented transport actions, a storage region being associated with the transport reservoir and in which state information can be stored, said state information specifying whether toner material is present in the transport reservoir; and

state information that specifies an empty state being stored upon reaching or exceeding the limit value.

56. (cancelled)